

Message Text

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SUBJ: EHCEVERRIA'S REMARKS ON MEXICAN-US RELATIONS

REF: MEXICO 10001

1. SUMMARY: DURING THE SATURDAY LUNCHEON HELD FOR VISITING PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA MADE SEVERAL CUTTING REMAKRS ON US-MEXICAN RELATIONS. HIS REMARKS ON THE SAME SUBJECT AT TUESDAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE WERE (SOMEWHAT) MORE GENEROUS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE SATURDAY LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF ANKER JERGENSN, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA GAVE A LONG EXTEMPORANEOUS MONOLOGUE LARGELY CONCERNING MEXICAN-US RELATIONS. HAVING FINISHED HIS WRITTEN WELCOMING SPEECH, ECHEVERRIA LAUNCHED INTO AN IMPROVISED HARANGUE WHICH WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY A CAPSULE HISTORY OF MEXICO, AN APOLOGY FOR INEQUITABLE INCOME DISTRIBUTION AND A DEFENSE OF MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY.

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3. IN REFERRING TO THE SLOW INCORPORATION OF THE MARGINAL CLASSES INTO MEXICAN SOCIETY, ECHEVERRIA STATED: "IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY TO LIVE NEXT TO THE GREATEST ECONOMIC, NUCLEAR, AND COMMERICAL POWER IN THE WORLD." THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT NOT ONLY HAD MEXICO LOST HALF ITS TERRITORY IN AN "UNJUST WAR" AT THE MIDDLE OF THE LAST CENTURY, BUT EVEN TODAY "GROUPS WITH A COLONIAL MENTALITY THINK THAT THE BEST IN THE WORLD IS IN ANY LITTLE VILLAGE OF TEXAS OR CALIFORNIA AND THAT HAPPINESS IS TO BE FOUND IN MANHATTAN OR IN NEW YORK."

4. ECHEVERRIA ALSO DEFENDED MEXICO'S RAPPROCHMENT WITH ALL MAJOR POWERS AND ADDED: "WITH RESPECT TO OUR POWERFUL NEIGHBORS OF THE NORTH, WE HAVE DEMONSTRATED TO THEM THAT WE WANT TO BE FRIENDS AND NOT SERVANTS. THE GREAT POWERS WITH ONE IDEOLOGICAL TENDENCY OR ANOTHER TEND TO BE EXPANSIONISTS, INTERVENTIONISTS IN THE SMALL AND MIDDLESIZED COUNTRIES. AND WHEN A COUNTRY IS NOT A MILITARY OR ECONOMIC POWER, IT HAS TO FIND... FRIENDS IN ORDER TO DEFEND ITSELF, TO ASSERT ITSELF, TO SAFEGUARD ITS INTERESTS; BUT THAT IMPLIES AS WELL TO PRESERVE ITS LIBERTIES IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS." (THE LATTER REMARKS WERE INTERPRETED IN THE NEWS ACCOUNT AS AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO BELIZE AND PANAMAMA.)

5. AT THE TUESDAY PRESS CONFERENCE HELD PRIOR TO JORGENSEN'S DEPARTURE, ECHEVERRIA'S REMARKS WERE SOMEWHAT MORE CONCILIATORY. HE ALLEGED THAT MEXICAN-US RELATIONS WERE FRIENDLY BECAUSE HIS ADMINISTRATION FOR FIVE YEARS HAD BEEN OUTLINING ITS POSITIONS "WITH DECISION AND CANDOR ... AND DEFENDING OUR INTERESTS OPENLY AND IN THE FRANKEST MANNER". HE ALLUDED TO "OVERT OR VEILED" US OPPOSITION TO CERDS, NAMCUAR, AND SELA AND SUGGESTED THAT THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH DO NOT SPEAK FRANKLY TO THE "GREAT EMPIRES, THE LARGE EXPANSIONIST COUNTRIES, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR IDEOLOGICAL ATTITUDE" RISK PERMANENT MEDDLING (IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS).

6. ON A MORE POSITIVE NOTE, ECHEVERRIA PRAISED FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON FOR KEEPING HIS PROMISE TO SOLVE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COLORADO SALINITY PROBLEM. AND HE INDICATED THAT THE US HAD KEPT A STRICTLY HANDS-OFF POLICY REGARDING MEXICAN INTERNAL POLITICS. DURING THE RECENT PRE-CANDIDACY PERIOD, HE STATED, "THERE WAS NOT EVEN A SINGLE QUESTION ON THE PART OF THE US" AS TO WHICH WOULD RECEIVE THE PRI'S NOMINATION. THUS, HE SAID, RELATIONS WERE "PRETTY GOOD" AFTER ALMOST TWO CENTURIES OF DIFFICULT ONES. JOVA

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